

## C L A I M S

What is claimed is:

1. A method for the automatic determination of color-density correction values for the reproduction of digital image data, wherein image color-density values of the digital image data are at least partially determined by area and are compared with known reproduction color-density values, the improvement comprising the steps of identifying eye scleras within the image data, and determining image color-density values based on said scleras.
2. Method as recited Claim 1, wherein eye positions are determined by means of a face-detection method in order to identify the scleras.
3. Method as recited in Claim 1, wherein eye positions are determined by means of a "red-eye" detection method in order to identify the scleras.
4. Method as recited in Claim 2, wherein areas of approximately white color are localized in the region of the eye positions in order to identify the scleras.

5. Method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the identified scleras are verified based on their surrounding environment.

6. Method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the identified scleras are verified based on their color saturation.

7. Method as recited in Claim 1, wherein the identified scleras are verified based on their geometric characteristics.

8. Method as recited in Claim 1, wherein an area is formed consisting of substantially all points belonging to a sclera.

9. Method as recited in Claim 8, wherein substantially all points within the area are used to determine image color-density values of the sclera.

10. Method as recited in Claim 1, wherein reproduction color-density values are determined based on statistics of color-density values from a large number of sample eye scleras.

11. Method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising the steps of determining color-density correction values in

dependence upon said scleras and color-density correction values in dependence upon skin tones, and adjusting the image color-density values based on said color-density correction values.